



# Managing the risk of flooding: Black Sluice Catchment

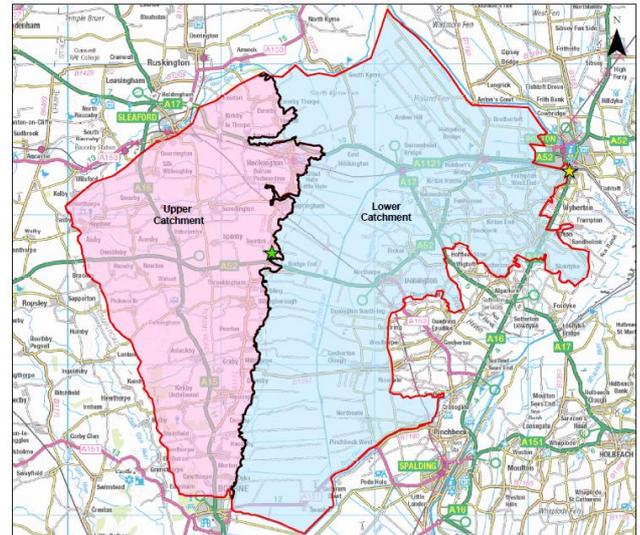
January 2016

**This briefing note will update you on how we are continuing to work with partners and local communities to manage flood risk in Black Sluice Catchment. It follows a six week formal consultation between 17 August and 27 September 2015 to seek your views on emerging options.**

## Why did a formal consultation take place?

This study of the catchment started back in 2012 to review how flood risk is managed and prepare a business case to refurbish the Black Sluice pumping station in Boston. It became clear that the pumping station does not reduce flood risk to people and their homes, although it does reduce the amount of agricultural land flooded. This makes it difficult for the Environment Agency (EA) to attract government funding.

The study looked at what additional activity, on top of current maintenance, could help manage flood risk in the future and different ways forward for the pumping station. We wanted to formally consult with people to get their opinions on the emerging options and benefit from their local knowledge.



## How did it go?

We are grateful to everyone who helped us promote the consultation. Six local events took place to give people the chance to come and talk to the Environment Agency (EA) and Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board (BSIDB) about these options and share their thoughts and ideas. More than 150 people came to see us – see photo to the left, taken at BSIDB offices.

We received a total of 71 responses from councillors, organisations and the local community. We would like to thank all those who took the time to submit their comments or a response form.

A document providing a summary of responses is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/manage-flood-risk-in-the-black-sluice-catchment> or call 02030 255031 for a hard copy to be posted to you.

## What are the main findings?

An analysis of the boxes ticked on the response form revealed that:

- Most people support transferring the Black Sluice pumping station to the BSIDB, followed by replacing two pumps to keep the current capacity. The options least supported are do nothing and do minimum i.e. removing the pumps.

- For the Lower Catchment, most people support protecting low points along the raised embankments from erosion, followed by making flood products available to homes most at risk. The options least supported are do nothing and do minimum i.e. continue with current maintenance.
- For the Upper Catchment, most people support increased channel maintenance downstream of villages, followed closely by 'slowing the flow' upstream to hold water back, and make flood products available to homes most at risk. The options least supported are do nothing and do minimum i.e. continue with current maintenance.

\*A 'do nothing' and 'do minimum' option are needed when putting together a business case to apply for funding to show that it is worth doing something.

In addition, 25 responses indicated a willingness to help deliver some of the proposed options.

## What are the next steps?

A joint position statement has been produced by the EA and BSIDB, following a request from Lincolnshire County Council, to outline the next steps:

1. A pioneering new Black Sluice Catchment Steering Group - with an independent chairman - has been formed to ensure continued dialogue between everyone involved in managing flood risk here in the future.
2. The EA and BSIDB will seek to identify funding for a two year transition period for the Black Sluice pumping station to be transferred to the BSIDB – to allow BSIDB time to put longer term funding in place.
3. The EA and BSIDB will continue with activities that can attract funding and fit within the strategic approach that the steering group will develop e.g. refurbishment of BSIDB land drainage pumping stations; protecting low points along the raised embankments from erosion – see photo; 'slowing the flow' upstream of Swaton and surrounding villages; and surveys to establish whether dredging would be beneficial.
4. A plan to operate and maintain flood risk infrastructure e.g. embankments will be jointly written by organisations with powers to manage flood risk. This will help make sure all the funding that is available to organisations can be used in the most effective way to help reduce flood risk.



A business case will be submitted in the spring 2016 to progress work that it has been demonstrated can attract full government funding. This will include £2 million to protect the low points along the raised embankments from erosion.

## Is my property at risk of flooding from the river?

There are just under 1,000 properties at risk of flooding in the Black Sluice catchment – regardless of whether the Black Sluice pumping station is operating. Find out if your property is one of them by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or look online [www.gov.uk/flood](http://www.gov.uk/flood). You may be able to register for free flood warnings to let you know when flooding is expected that could affect your home.

## I have a question...

If you have any enquiries, or would like to share additional information with us, please contact the Project Team by email [BlackSluiceCatchment@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:BlackSluiceCatchment@environment-agency.gov.uk) or call 02030 255031.